

JOSEPH BISCHOFF HOMESTEAD NO. 2
Cottonwood Canyon Road
Lovell vicinity
Big Horn County
Wyoming

HABS No.

WY-164

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Intermountain Support Office - Denver
National Park Service
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225-0287

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

JOSEPH D. BISCHOFF HOMESTEAD NO. 2

HABS No. WY-164

Location: The site is located on the north side of Cottonwood Creek at the foot of Cottonwood Canyon, on the south side of the Cottonwood Canyon Road about six miles east of the intersection of that road with U.S. Alternate Route 14. It is located approximately 18 miles east of Lovell, Wyoming. USGS Cottonwood Canyon Quadrangle, UTM coordinates 12.731030.4971875.

Significance: This site is associated with early twentieth-century homesteading in the Little Mountain area in Big Horn County, Wyoming (Criterion A). This site is part of a 640.96-acre Stock Raising Homestead filed on by Joseph D. Bischoff in 1924 and patented in 1929. Bischoff was the son of Nephi Daniel Bischoff, a pioneer rancher who became a prominent rancher and landowner in the Lovell region. Many of the Bischoff family members filed on homesteads in the area to increase the family's overall land holdings. This site and the associated land parcel were retained by the Bischoff family and absorbed into a larger ranching operation in the Little Mountain area. This is one of the best-preserved examples of the family's early homesteading efforts and was the principal residence on Joseph Bischoff's homestead. It is also eligible under Criterion C because it is a well-crafted log cabin that utilizes logs that were milled on three sides with milled lumber strips placed between the joints to create a tight fit. Furthermore, there is a well-crafted exterior chimney and interior fireplace that are notable for their quarried stone blocks and fire brick salvaged from a bottling factory in Lovell that was burned down/razed in 1926. Many of the stones retain deposits of melted glass on the surface.

Description: Building A consists of a one-story, side-gabled log building (25' E-W x 23' N-S x 12' high) that rests on a mortared stone foundation up to two feet high on the south (downslope) side. The building foundation is partially excavated into a gentle south slope of a hill. The moderately-pitched gable roof is covered with red asphalt shingles, many of which have blown off. The walls of the building are constructed with logs that have been sawn on three sides with the unfinished round side facing outward. The logs have butted joints and sawn ends that extend 18"-20" beyond the wall. The joints between each log are filled with milled lumber strips, eliminating the need for cement or mud/clay chinking. The roof is supported by milled lumber rafters and trusses with full round peeled logs forming the bottom of each major roof truss. The roof has open eaves with exposed rafter ends. It has a wood-sheathed deck that is clad with red asphalt shingles, many of which have blown away. A portion of the south roof slope is missing, exposing the rafters. There is around stovepipe hole cut in the roof deck in the northwest corner.

One of the most notable features of the building is a well-crafted large exterior stone chimney (87" x 33" x 15' high) on the west side that extends above the ridgeline of the roof. The stones are shaped and squared. According to Bischoff family informants, they were salvaged from a glass or bottle factory that burned in Lovell in 1926. Many of the stones retain a veneer of melted glass. Some of the stones appear to be large rectangular fire brick with terra cotta-colored glazed surfaces. There are two single entrances to the building, one centered in the south side and one in the east side. Both doors have been removed; the door bays are 32" x 78". All of the windows have also been removed; however, 2" x 6" wood sills and frames remain. A large rectangular window bay in the east portion of the south wall is 7' x 42". There is

also a 39" x 40" window bay in the east portion of the south wall. The east, north, and west walls each have two 24" x 38" window bays.

The interior of the building has a poured concrete floor. There is no ceiling, and the roof trusses and roof deck are fully exposed. There is a large stone fireplace built in the west wall constructed with squared stone and firebrick similar to the corresponding exterior chimney. It measures 93" wide by 48" high. The fireplace opening is 64" x 38". The fireplace has a stone mantel that is 41" x 87". The floor in front of the fireplace opening has a 25" wide brick apron. A steel support runs horizontally through the mantel area. There are no shelves, cabinets, or other built-in furnishings and the remainder of the interior is empty except for a sofa that is obviously modern.

History: The site is located on a 640.96-acre parcel of land filed on by Joseph D. Bischoff on August 27, 1924, and patented May 9, 1929 (SRHE Pat.No. 1027182). He built a dwelling on his homestead in September 1924, living in a tent until the house was completed. He then resided on his homestead. By the end of 1928, Bischoff had cleared and planted about 200 acres of land producing oats, alfalfa, hay clover, and grass. Bischoff irrigated his crops by constructing the High Ditch, which diverted water from Cottonwood Creek. Bischoff also grazed 35 head of cattle on his homestead. After Bischoff received a patent for his property in 1929, he moved into Lovell with his wife, and the house was utilized as a "line cabin" for ranch hands.

Joseph's father and mother were Nephi Daniel (Dan) and Annie S. Bischoff, Mormons who emigrated by wagon from Utah to the Big Horn Basin of Wyoming in 1901. They settled near Lovell and engaged in cattle ranching. Starting with 100 head of cattle, Bischoff proceeded to buy other tracts of land and obtained U.S. Forest Service grazing leases for the Bighorn Mountains. He, his wife, and his five sons also took out homesteads in and around the Bighorn Mountains, and the Bischoff ranches grew into one of the largest cattle operations in the region. After Daniel Bischoff died in a farming accident in 1931, his wife Annie and her sons managed the ranching business. After she died in 1950, her sons continued to operate the ranch. Joseph Bischoff's former homestead was recently obtained by the BLM for the creation of the Craig Thomas Special Management Unit.

Sources:

Big Horn County Clerk

n.d. Big Horn County Clerk, Land Abstracts (microfilm), Wyoming State Archives, Cheyenne.

Bischoff, Loretta, Telephonic Communication, Lovell, Wyoming, 6 March 2009.

Bureau of Land Management

n.d. General Land Office Records, Land Patents. <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov>.

Feick, Duane, BLM, Cody Office, Telephonic Communication, 9 March 2009.

Kysar, Pam Bischoff, Telephonic Communication, Cody, Wyoming, 11 March 2009.

Moats, Bruce T.

- 1980 "Ag Family 'Dream' Stretches from Top of Bighorns to Beartooths." *Basin Republican*, Basin, Wyoming, 24 December 1980.

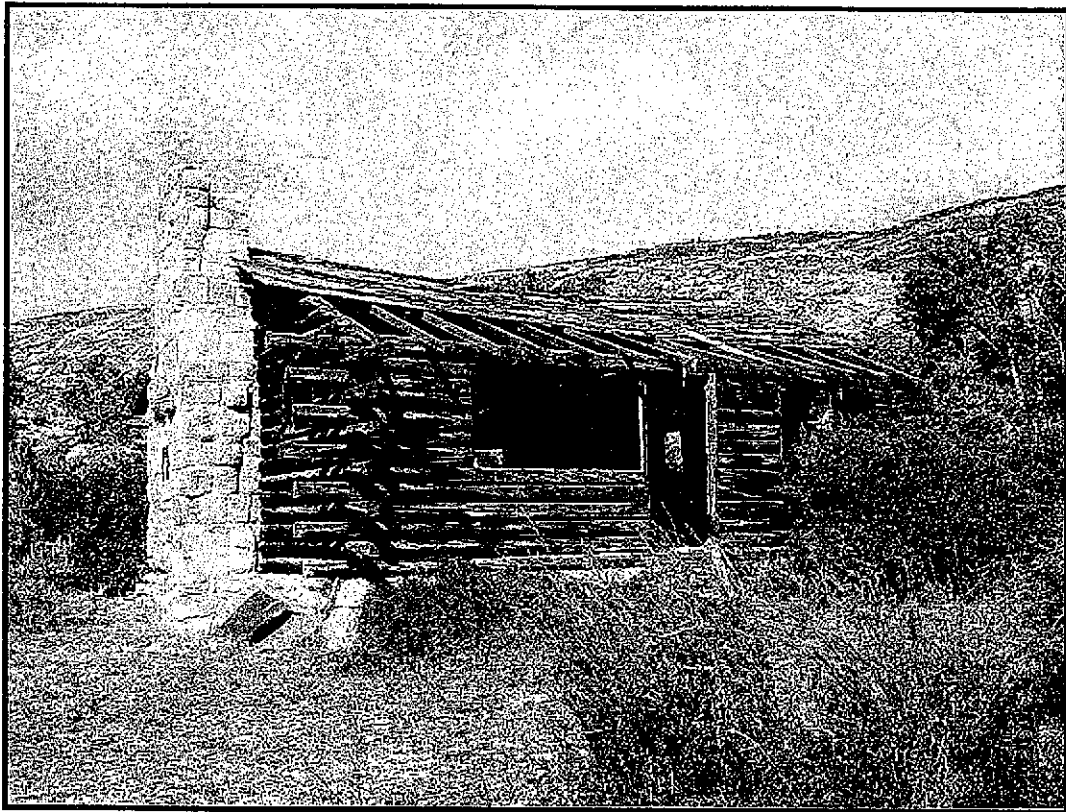
National Archives

- n.d. Land Entry Records, General Land Office (NATF 84). National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

No Author

- 1931 "N.D. Bischoff Fatally Injured." *The Lovell Chronicle*, Lovell, Wyoming, 15 January 1931, p. 1.
- 1950 "Elderly Pioneer Laid to Rest." *The Lovell Chronicle*, Lovell, Wyoming, 6 April 1950, p. 1.

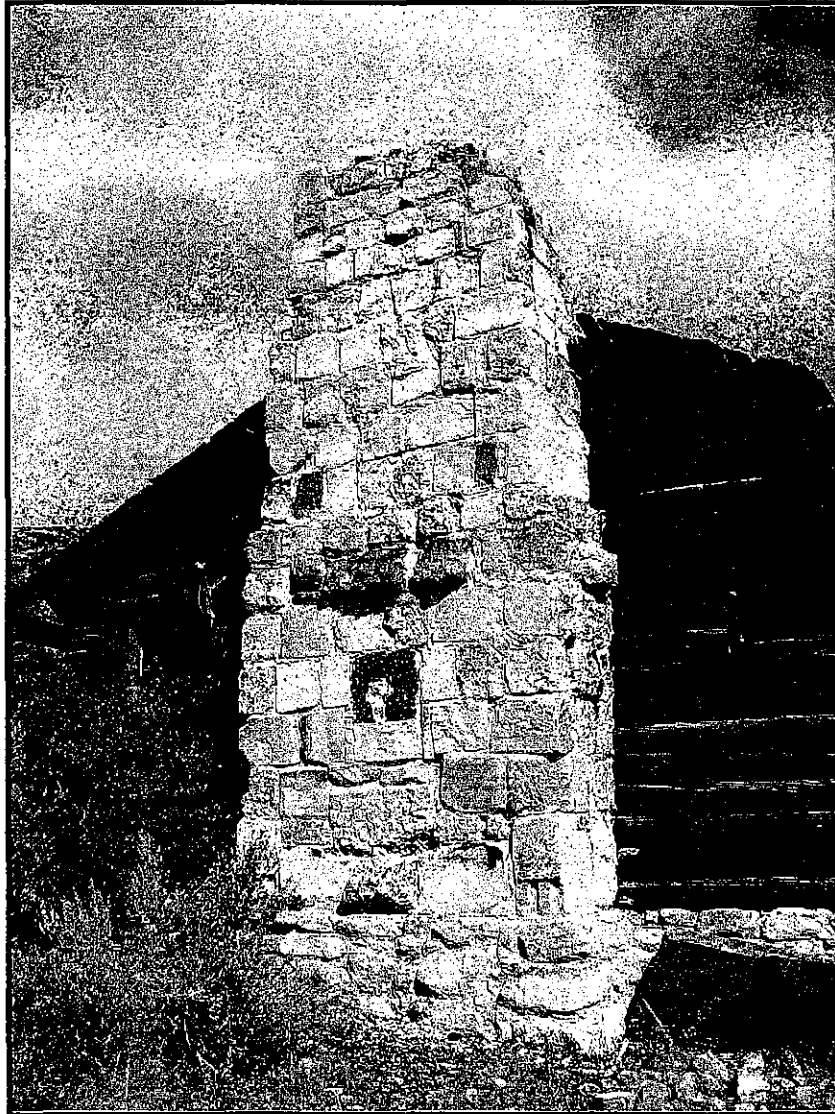
Historian: Robert G. Rosenberg, Rosenberg Historical Consultants, 739 Crow Creek Road, Cheyenne, WY. 82009.



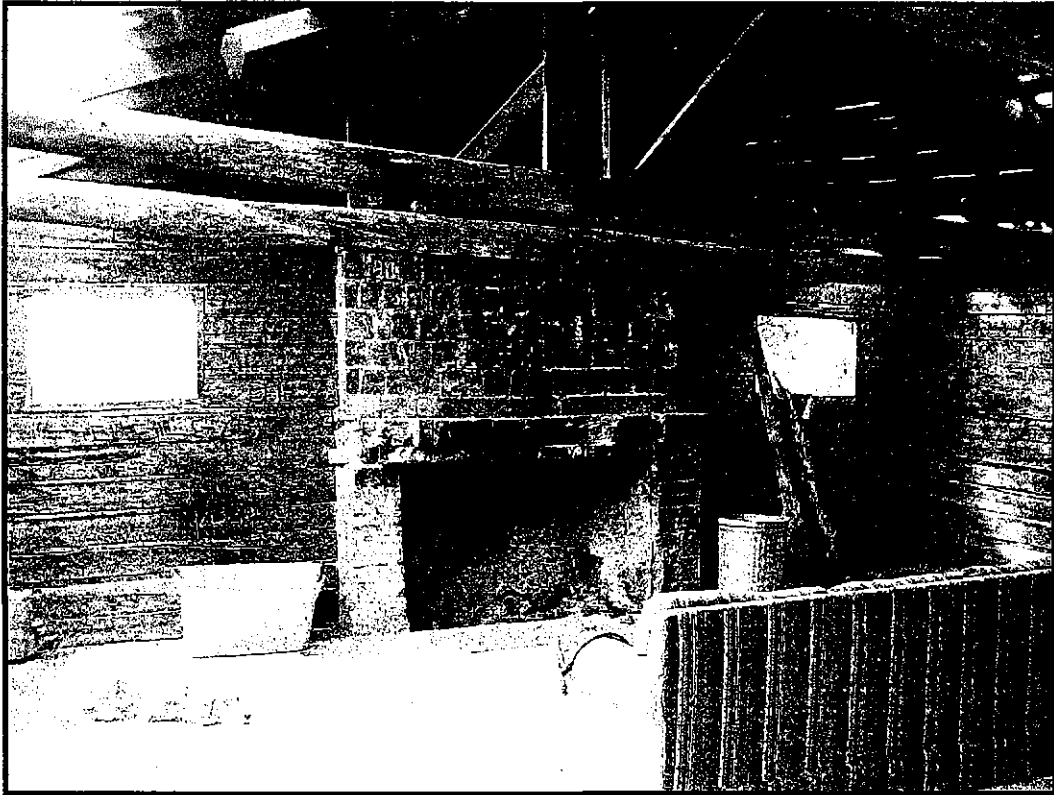
View to northeast of west and south sides of Building A, the Joseph D. Bischoff Homestead No. 2.



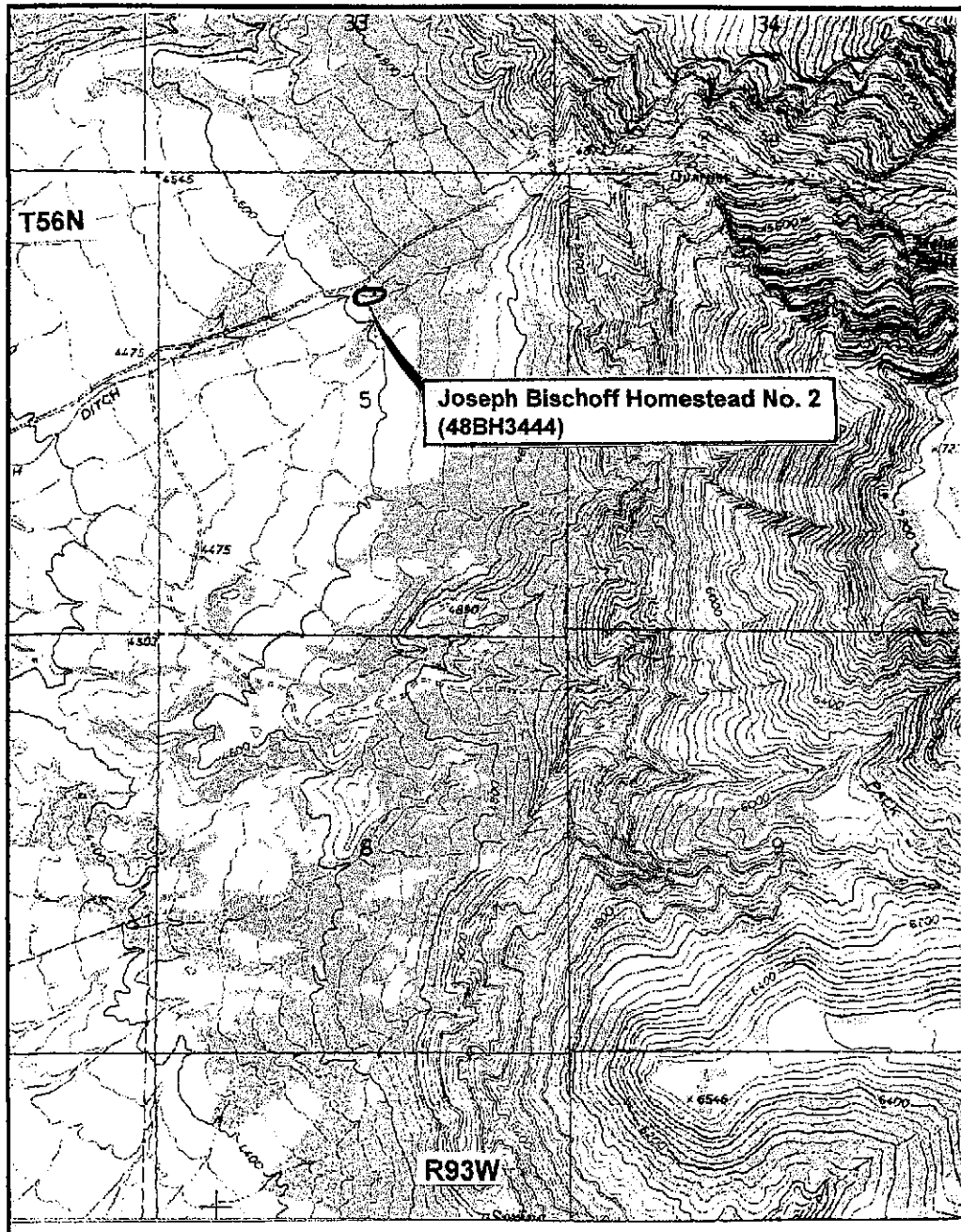
View to west-northwest of south and east sides of Building A, the Joseph D. Bischoff Homestead No. 2.



View to east-northeast of the massive chimney on the west side of Building A, the Joseph D. Bischoff Homestead No. 2.



Interior of west wall and fireplace in Building A, the Joseph D. Bischoff Homestead No. 2.



Location map: Joseph D. Bischoff Homestead No. 2. This homestead is located in the SW/NE, SE/NW Section 5, T56N-R93W, on the Cottonwood Canyon 7.5' USGS quadrangle.